xxxvin. Plato gives an account, why he judged it necessary in those times, publicly to propose that Atheistic hypothesis, in order to a confutation, as also to produce rational arguments for the proof of a Deity, after this manner:

De Leg. lib. j?J ^ Karnrirapjulvoi T^aav **oi** TOCOVTOC Xo-yot *iv* oper. rote iracrcv, cJc €TTO£ CITTCIV, avOpwrrow;, ou&v *av* €&c TCMV €7rafWFOinrc*»v Xo-ywv, <Jc «<TI 6101, vvv 8t ayayicif Had not these Atheistic doctrines been publicly divulged, and made known in a manner to all, it would not have been needful to have confuted them, nor by reasons to prbve a Deity ; but now it is necessary. — And we conceive, that the same necessity at this time will justify our present undertaking likewise; since these Atheistic doctrines have been as boldly vented, and publicly asserted in this latter age of our's, as ever they could be in Plato's time ; when the severity of the Athenian government must needs be a great check to such designs, Socrates having been put to death upon a mere false and groundless accusation of Atheism, and Protagoras (who doubtless was a real Atheist) having escaped the same punishment no otherwise than by flight, hid books being, notwithstanding, publicly burnt in the market-place at Athens, and himself condemned to perpetual exile, though there was nothing at that time proved against him, save only this one sceptical passage, in the begin-viu[g]prou(£, wing of a book of his :

yap TO.

<*Hv* o |3ioc *Toii* aV&pctJTrov* Concerning the god$, I bave nothing at all to say,

either that they be or be not; there being many things, that hinder